

15th May, 1926.

To the Chairman and Members of the Rye Rural District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my Twenty-Sixth Annual Report upon the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the Rye Rural District. This is also a Survey Report upon the past five years, prepared in accordance with the instructions contained in a circular issued by the Ministry of Health.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

The District is undulating with slow-running streams, which drain into the Rother, Tillingham and Brede Rivers. Some of the land near the rivers is below the level of the sea at high-tide, and is apt to be flooded for long periods in the winter months. The subsoil is generally clay.

Area of the District	...	...	...	37,257 acres
Population of the District (Census, 1921)	.			6,830
Estimated Population (1925)	...	...		6,888
Number of Inhabited Houses (1921)	...	...		1,820
Estimated Number of Families or Separate Occupiers (1921)	...	...	...	1,857
Rateable Value of the District	...	...		£53,103
Sum Represented by a Penny Rate	...	...		£132
Sum Spent upon Poor Law Relief (Outdoor) during 1925	..	...	...	£854 3s. 5d.

The most important Industry in the District is Agriculture, with a considerable area devoted to Hops, and there is very little unemployment. There is a Fishing Industry at Rye Harbour.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the Year 1925.

		Total	Male	Female	
Births	{ Legitimate ...	101	46	55	} Birth Rate— 15 per thousand
	{ Illegitimate ...	2	0	2	
Deaths*	...	82			Death Rate—11.9 per thousand
Number of Women dying in or in consequence of Childbirth—					
	From Sepsis ...	0			From other causes ... 0
Deaths of Infants under one year of age, per thousand births ... 19.4					
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ... 0					
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ... 0					
Deaths from Diphtheria (all ages) ... 1					
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age) ... 0					

There was no excessive mortality from any Disease during the year.

There has been no excessive prevalence of any Infectious Disease during the last five years. There have been, during that period, five cases of Typhoid or Paratyphoid Fever (four in Iden and one in Playden), of which cases three occurred in the past year. Although various articles of diet were tested, and search was made for a "Carrier," the source of infection could not be ascertained. The number of cases of Diphtheria during the same period was twelve, with three deaths. There were no cases of locally contracted Malaria, Dysentery, or Trench Fever, and only one case of Encephalitis Lethargica.

Swabs are taken from the throats of suspected cases of Diphtheria, and Antitoxic Serum for this treatment is supplied free of charge.

Most of the cases of Notifiable Infectious Disease are treated in the Isolation Hospital, and there have been no return cases of Scarlet Fever.

The Schieb and Dich tests of liability to infection with Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever have not been made use of. No vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been done by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917. Disinfection of houses and clothing is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector upon the termination of Infectious cases.

There was no cause of sickness deserving of special mention during 1925. The rainfall was above the average and there was no great lack of water during the Summer.

Notifiable Diseases other than Tuberculosis during 1925.

DISEASE		Total Notifications	Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	...	0	0	0
Diphtheria	...	3	1	1
Scarlet Fever	...	11	8	0
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)		3	1*	0
Puerperal Fever	...	0	0	0

* Treated at the Memorial Hospital.

There were no cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

TUBERCULOSIS—New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

NEW CASES				DEATHS			
Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
9	3	1	2	1	2	0	1

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME. There are seven District Nurses who visit the sick and supervise the Home Nursing: they are all registered midwives, and most of the Maternity cases in the District are attended by them; they are engaged and paid by Nursing Committees in the different villages, but in return for a grant from the County Council they undertake the Antenatal care of expectant mothers, and supervise and report upon the infants to the age of five years; they also meet the Schools Medical Officer, and follow up the cases recommended by him for treatment. They are not as a rule available for nursing Infectious cases.

There are no Clinics or Treatment Centres in the District.

TUBERCULOSIS. Cases are treated in a separate Ward in the Rye Union Infirmary, and suitable cases are sent to Sanatoria outside the District, especially to the Darvell Hall Sanatorium at Robertsbridge, which is maintained by the County Council.

VENEREAL DISEASES. Clinics for the free treatment of these Diseases are open at the Royal East Sussex Hospital.

SMALLPOX. One bed in the Hastings Smallpox Hospital, situated in the Parish of Brede, is reserved for the Urban and Rural Districts of Rye, and this is the only provision made for an epidemic of Smallpox, though the number of unvaccinated persons in the District increases every year.

HOSPITALS. The Conjoint Isolation Hospital in the Parish of Udimore receives cases of Infectious Disease from the Urban and Rural Districts of Rye: there are two Wards of six beds each, and during 1925 the Hospital was utilised for eight cases of Scarlet Fever and one case of Diphtheria from the Rural District.

The chief addition to the Health Services of the District during the last five years has been the opening of the Rye, Winchelsea and District Memorial Hospital in 1921. It is situated in the Parish of Playden and contains eighteen beds ; it is well equipped with modern facilities for diagnosis and treatment.

The Royal East Sussex Hospital at Hastings and the London Hospitals are also made use of by residents in the District.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES. There is one for Infectious cases and one for Non-Infectious cases ; both are in the Borough of Rye.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE. Bye-Laws relating to New Buildings, Tents, Vans and Sheds, and Regulations with respect to Dairies, Cow-Sheds and Milk Shops were adopted in 1902. Bye-Laws for securing the decent lodging of persons engaged in Hop-Picking or in the picking of Fruit and Vegetables were adopted in 1915.

Parts II and III of the Public Health, 1925—Sections 23, 25, 26, 33, 34, 38, 42 and 43—came into force in the District in January, 1926.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

WATER. The town of Winchelsea has its own waterworks. The water is laid on to the houses, and there is a constant supply of good quality. Rye Harbour, about half of Playden, and a third of Rye Foreign are supplied from the Borough of Rye—a constant supply of good quality. The rest of the District is dependent upon wells and springs for its supply, which is generally deficient in a dry summer.

There is no serious pollution of Rivers or Streams in the District.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE. Rye Harbour has a modern sewerage system with the effluent discharging into the sea.

Winchelsea has a sewerage system with purification works which discharge into the River Brede ; these are the only parts of the District with waterworks and flush tanks.

Icklesham parts of the Parish are served by sewers and a sewerage farm.

Northiam, parts of Playden, Iden, Peasmarsh and Brede are provided with sewers and cesspools, with overflows sometimes used for surface irrigation ; these portions of the District have some water-closets, but no water is laid on. The remainder of the District is supplied mainly with earth-closets and a small number of privy middens, water closets connected to cesspools, and chemical closets. The last mentioned are increasing in number, particularly in connection with new buildings.

SCAVENGING. In the town of Winchelsea an incinerator is provided, where the Council undertakes the burning and subsequent disposal of refuse brought there by the inhabitants. In all other cases the refuse is disposed of on gardens and by burning.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

According to the report of the Sanitary Inspector the number of Inspections made during 1925 was 105.

Number of Notices served during the year—Informal, 37 ; Statutory, 3.

Result of the service of such Notices—All complied with.

The accommodation provided for hop-pickers was inspected before and during hop-picking, and proceedings were taken for offences against the Bye-Laws for the Accommodation of Hop-Pickers, and three convictions were obtained.

The Dairies, Cow-Sheds and Milk-Shops have been inspected, also the Bake-Houses and Slaughter-Houses.

The Sanitary condition of the Public Elementary Schools and their Water Supply are satisfactory.

Housing.

GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS. The houses consist largely of detached and semi-detached cottages of timber or brick, with tiled roofs. Some are of considerable age, low pitched, and liable to shew signs of dampness in wet weather. They are mostly scattered about the District, and no closely built areas exist. There is no acute shortage, and the present rate of building should, within the next few years, remedy what slight shortage exists.

OVERCROWDING. Very few cases of overcrowding come under notice. Action was taken in one case, and the tenant removed to a larger house.

FITNESS OF HOUSES. The general standard for an Agricultural District is fair. The defects are mainly due to the age of the buildings and dilapidations due to neglect by the owner. In some cases, drainage disposal is a difficulty—the only outlet being to ditches. Action to remedy unfitness is taken generally under the Housing Acts, and the houses are made fit, if possible, without closing; the latter course being avoided, where possible, owing to the lack of surplus houses available for the tenants.

UNHEALTHY AREAS. There are no unhealthy areas in the District. There are no Common Lodging Houses.

The Bye-Laws dealing with Vans, Tents, Sheds, etc., are adequate.

Housing Statistics for the Year 1925.

Number of New Houses erected during the year—

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b)).	...	37
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :		
(i) By the Local Authority	... ..	0
(ii) By other bodies or persons	... ..	8

1—Unfit Dwelling Houses.

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	104
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	74
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	0
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	... ..	20

2—Remedy of Defects without Service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	...	20
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3—Action under Statutory Powers.

A—Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	35
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—				
(a) by owners	35			
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ...	0			
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close ...	0			
B--Proceedings under Public Health Acts.				
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	3			
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices—				
(a) by owners	3			
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ...	0			
C--Proceedings under Sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.				
(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	0			
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	0			
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	0			
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	0			
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	0			

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

An adequate supply of good Milk is produced in the area and a considerable amount is exported. No applications have been made for licences for Graded Milk.

Under the Tuberculosis Order, 1925, four cows were slaughtered and condemned as unfit for food.

There are no public slaughter houses. The number of private slaughter houses is as follows :—

		In 1920	January, 1925	December, 1925
Registered	...	7	8	8
Licensed	...	0	0	0

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WALTER WYNNE,

M.O.H. Rye Rural District.

